Strange NEWS from

ARPINGTON

NEAR

Bexly in Kent:

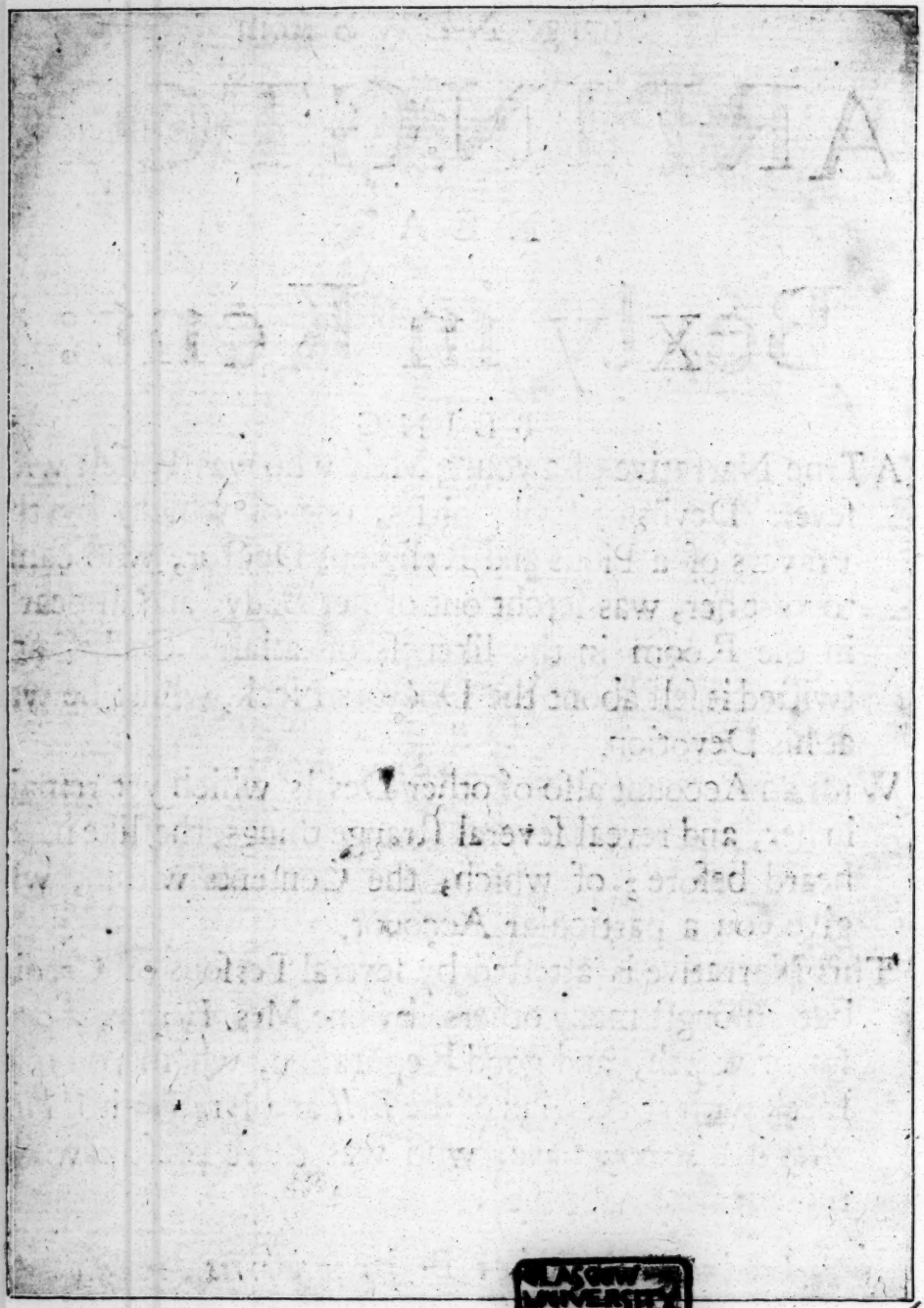
BEING

A True Narrative of a young Maid who was Poſſeſt with ſeveral Devils or Evil Spirits, one of which, by the Prayers of a Pious and Religious Doctor, who came to viſit her, was fetcht out of her Body, and appear'd in the Room in the likeneſs of a large Snake, and twiſted it ſelf abont the Doctors Neck, whilſt he was at his Devotion.

With an Account alſo of other Devils which yet remain in her, and reveal ſeveral ſtrange things, the like never heard before; of which, the Contents within, will give you a particular Account.

This Narrative is atteſted by ſeveral Perſons of Credit, but amongſt many others, by one Mrs. *Hopper*, a perſon of worth, and good Reputation, whom you may ſpeak with at the Sign of the *Bell* and *Draggon* in *Whites Ally* in *Chancery-Lane*, who was there preſent whilſt this accident happened.

London, Printed for *Benjamin Harris*. 1689.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WHat Scope and Power the Almighty is pleas'd to allot the *Prince of Darkneſs, and his Evil Spirits*, would be more becoming the buſineſs of a large Volumn, than a little Sheet: ſome Divines have indeed endeavoured to gueſs at it, but none of them ever perfectly deſided it. I ſhall not therefore trouble my Reader with any tedious harangue of ſeveral Mens opinions in this particular, but preſently fall on the ſtrange circumſtances of this wonderful Narrative, the particulars whereof are of ſufficient validity to confirm the moſt ſtaggering and unreſolved Chriſtian, and to convert the moſt impudent and incredulous *Atheiſt* in the whole World.

The perſon nominated in the Title Page, who atteſts the verity of this Relation, happening to have ſome near Relations who lived very near the place where this occurrence happened, chanced ſome time ſince to give them a Viſit, and hearing (aſſoon as ſhe arrived there) a General Wonder, and ſeeing an Univerſal Conſternation appearing almoſt in every ones Countenance, at this Young Maids being poſſeſt with the Devil or Evil Spirits, which for ſome time were heard to talk and skriek within her; ſhe had a great curioſity to become an Eye-witneſs of what every one reported to be ſo miraculous, partly to ſatisfie her own incredulity, and partly that ſhe might credibly inform others of what ſhe had been ſo often told her ſelf, contriving in this Reſolution, ſhe made farther inquiry after this buſineſs, whereby ſhe underſtood, that thoſe Devils or Evil Spirits which inhabited in this miſerable Creature, like thoſe which poſſeſs'd *Saul*, were not at all times Injurious alike, but ſometimes ſuffer'd her a little freedom from their unruly and incompaſſionate Rage.

She was farther informed, that an eminent Doctor, whom She had long known, was the Maids greateſt viſitant; he by the double aſſiſtance of his Devotion and Phyſick, had bin much more effectual than all other means uſed towards the Mittigating or aſſwaging of her violent Fits, ſo that the Atteſter hereof, becauſe She would ſee the utmoſt, choſe out ſuch an opportunity to go viſit this poſſeſſed Creature, as theſe Fits were come upon her, and her Friend the Doctor was there.

The place where this diſtreſſed Creature lay, was at a Town known by the name of *Arpington*, above three Miles diſtant

distant from *Bexly* a Market Town in *Kent*, and it was on *Munday* the fifth day of this Instant *May* when this Atteſter went to ſee her; when ſhe firſt entred the Room, She found the Maid in the very height of one of her dreadful Fits; dreadful I may well call them, ſince thoſe envious Spirits within her, ſtill retain their Deviliſh Natures, had contracted her Nerves, Joynts and Sinews, after ſo wonderful a manner, that they had almoſt drawn her out of human Shape; ſhe appeared almoſt of a heap with a Face though comely and well favour'd before, yet in this Fit ſo ſqueez'd, and drawn out of Shape, that her neareſt Relations, had not they been acquainted with what happened before, could not have known her, her Teeth were ſet, as at the approach of Death, and her ſtrained Eye-ſtring had pulled her Eye-balls an incredible way into her Head; in this dreadful poſture ſhe appear'd when the Atteſter came into the Room, and found her acquaintance Doctor *Boreman* earneſtly at his Prayers by her, ſo that all the Spectators remain'd in a great Silence and expectation of what would be the event of ſo unuſual an accident.

But no curioſity could be large enough to expect what immediately happened, for as this worthy Doctor was in the midſt of his Devotion, notwithſtanding the Maids Teeth were ſo ſet, and her Lips as aforeſaid, yet at the very juncture, all the people might hear theſe Infernal Spirits groan as it were in her Belly; and whether it were through the extream fervency of him who Prayed, or any other ſupernatural cauſe, Heaven only knows, but at length one of theſe Spirits or Devils was heard by

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all the Spectators, and particularly by Mrs. *Hopper*, who then ſtood very near her, in a dreadful Tone to ſpeak theſe words very diſtinctly, *Weaker and weaker, weaker and weaker*; which Exclamation it repeated four times over, and then ſeaſed.

What Horror, what Conſternation and Amazement did this, or rather did it not, work in the wondering Auditors, ſome of them clapt their hands on their Hearts, and with elevated Eyes, ſeemed to tell the reſt, that Amazement had made them looſe, or at leaſt forget the uſe of their Tongues, others ſtood as ſtill, as if they had been Metamorphiſed into Statues; others ran out of the Room almoſt ſenſeleſs, and were ſometime before they could declare the Reaſon of ſo ſudden a ſurpriſal.

But this Gentlewoman being of an undaunted Courage, was reſolved to ſtay and ſee the laſt of what would happen, and therefore ſtirred not out of the Room till the Doctor had done, and a little after, both ſhe and all that were left in the Room, might again hear one of the ſame Spirits within her, which had got poſſeſſion of the Maid, to bark like a little Dogg twice together.

This was all that was heard or ſeen worthy of publick Remark at this time.

But onanother day wherein this poor Creature was ſeiſed on by theſe Lamentable Fits, the ſame perſon was earneſtly at Prayer on his knees by her, when behold a far greater wonder than we have before related, happened in the ſight of a great number of ſpectators who then came to ſee her. I know to many it will ſeem Incredulous, for

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I know there are ſome people which will not believe there are any ſuch things as Witches or Spirits, becauſe they then know they muſt in all Reaſon be Induced to believe there is a God, which by reaſon of a conſtant courſe and habit of Sin, a uſual cuſtom of Flouring and Laughing at the News of a Heaven or a Hell, or an eternal being in the World to come; theſe would not willingly that the ſubſiſtance of a Deity ſhould be found true.

But ſince no Reaſons nor Examples will convince ſuch obſtinate humoriſts, let them perſiſt irrefractory, till Startling Death, with its train of Terrors, open their Blind-Eyes, and in ſpite of all their unwillingneſs to the contrary, preſents them with a Landskip of thoſe infernal Territories; the gloomy habitations of Devils or damned Souls, where they are likely to remain to all eternity. In the Interim, good Chriſtians will believe their Eyes and other ſences, and when creditably and unanimouſly Related, as this, will credit the atteſtation of others; and therefore I ſhall boldly divulge this as an undoubted truth. That as the aforeſaid Doctor was Praying again for this diſtreſſed Creature, a live and ſeeming ſubſtance forc'd its way out of her mouth in likeneſs of a large Serpent, and flew to the Doctor, winding it ſelf, in the preſence of the whole auditory about his neck, where it for ſome time remain'd, till ſome of the ſtanders by were going to pluck it off, at which it immediatly Vaniſhed, and was never ſeen ſince. This I ſay was done before a Multitude of People, all of which are ready to confirm it under their hands, to be a viſible truth.

There yet remains another of theſe Spirits in this Maid,

Maid, which many times distorts her in the manner abovementioned, the noys of it is heard as she goes or moves; it will at some times answer several questions propos'd to it, at other times make a hidious murmuring, as if it disliked its present habitation; which unparalleled wonder, People come far and near to see, and all return with the same acknowledgment, that they never saw nor heard of the like all their Lives.

POSTSCRIPT.

The Gentlewoman who gives her Attestation to the Truth of this Narrative, returned up to London, *but on* Munday *last, she spoke with both the Maid (when her Fit was mittigated) and the Doctor, under whose Tuition she still remains, and from charitable endeavours we hope to hear of farther success; of which you may have a further Relation, and the unquestionable Truth both of that and this, attested by several substantial Witnesses.*

FINIS.

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